

Therapeutic plasma exchange, number 53

"I feel okay," the dancer sighs,
(The tubing hurts; she shifts her thigh
Along the bed.) "Perhaps we'll try
Just one a week?"
And now a tear is in her eye.
"Just one a week."

I can't agree, though; when I looked
Her numbers up last night, I took
A single glance, then sadly shook
My head. No luck.
Dialysis is next, it's booked,
And she is stuck.

The dancer shakes her aching wrist:
Sore echo of precision twists
Made by a principal who missed
A step and dropped
Into into a bed, while life persists,
Its swirl unstopped.

At first each odd result was hailed
As rare, and lovingly detailed,
Our eculizumab then failed.
That shocked us. We
Now hint she should accept a veiled
Catastrophe.

I ask about her faith. The dancer
Shifts again before she answers
That she was born to the manor,
The child of two
Young missionaries killed when cancer
Came burning through.

My own feet cannot walk the aisles
Of any church; it's not my style.
But then the dancer sighing smiles
And asks, to wit,
If she might pause with me a while
And simply sit.

—Aaron S. Hess, MD, PhD



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